

## VIII. INSTALLING SELF-COVERED FLOORING

Self-covered resilient sheet flooring has a number of benefits on residential and commercial installations. Resilient flooring is more durable than, for instance, wood or vinyl cove base and there are no floor/wall junctures or cracks to collect and trap soil.

The key to self-covered flooring is to make an accurate pattern of the room from felt and then transcribe it to the flooring material (previous section). This method will provide an accurate fit and eliminate the possibility of voids between the cove fillet stick and the flooring, to ensure durability and resistance to puncture damage. Additionally, knowledge of inside and outside corner treatment, cap materials, end stops, etc., is required. The following are the procedures for installing self-covered sheet flooring products.

### Subfloor and Wall Preparation

Standard subfloor preparation methods as described earlier for any other fully adhered flooring installation should be followed. The walls should be solid, smooth, and extend unbroken to the subfloor.

### Cap Trim Installation

A cap trim for the top of the floor covering is required on self-covered installations. Aluminum cap is generally used. However, vinyl moldings are also available for this purpose.

The height of the cap trim from the subfloor can vary. The distance, however, is usually 4" to 6" (10.2cm to 15.2cm) and is frequently determined by the height of the cabinet toe kick. The cap trim should be installed parallel with the subfloor. The exact distance can be maintained by using a strip of wood cut to the desired height (Figure 92). If minor waviness exists in the subfloor, it is desirable to snap a chalk line on the wall at the predetermined height (Figure 93).

At corners, the cap trim can be mitered (Figure 94) or notched (Figure 95). Notching is the preferred method on outside corners, because it eliminates the possibility of sharp edges. (Figure 96).

The cap trim should be securely fastened to the wall with nails, brads, staples or adhesive (or a combination of both). The use of contact adhesive is a good way to fasten cap trim to concrete walls.

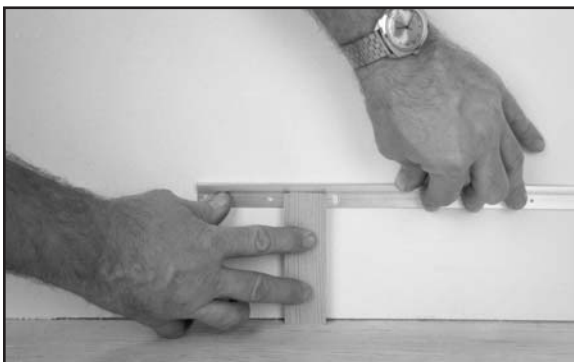


Fig. 92. Use a piece of wood to maintain consistent height of cap trim.



Fig. 93. Snap a chalk line if waviness exists in subfloor.



Fig. 94. Mitered Cap



Fig. 95. Notched Cap

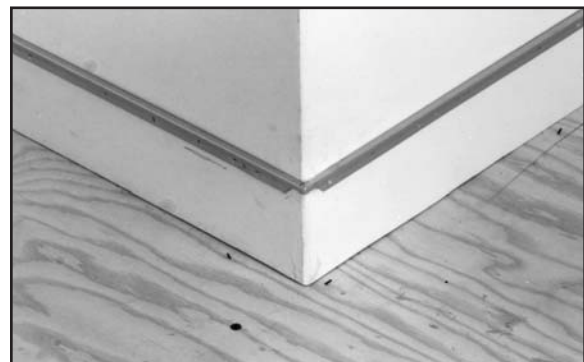


Fig. 96. Notched Cap on Outside Corner

### Fitting of Cove Fillet Strip

The radius of the cove fillet strip should be at least 1" (2.5cm). The most common type available is wood; however, there are suitable types of plastic (Figure 97).

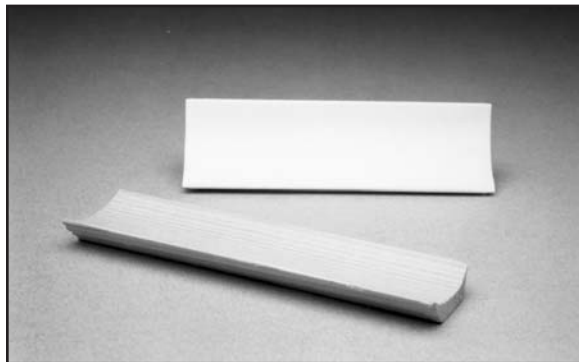


Fig. 97. Wood and Plastic Cove Fillet Strip

Care should be used to acquire an accurate miter of the covestick at corners. They should be tightly butted (Figure 98). Preformed end stops are available, however, if the cap trim is returned to the floor and used as an end stop, the cove fillet strip should be gradually tapered to a blunt point starting 2" to 3" (5.1cm to 7.6cm) from the cap trim (Figure 99). It is permissible to leave small gaps (up to 1/8" or 3.2mm) at joints between pieces of cove fillet strip.



Fig. 98. Butt cove fillet strip tightly at inside and outside corners.



Fig. 99. Gradually taper cove fillet strip starting 2" to 3" (5.1cm to 7.6cm) from cap trim.

Secure the cove fillet strip in place by driving fasteners about every 12" (30.5cm) into the subfloor or

walls (Figure 100). Where the walls and subfloor are concrete, use contact adhesive or flooring adhesive applied with a paint brush to fasten the cove fillet strip in place. This is also an alternate method to using fasteners.



Fig. 100. Fasten cove fillet strip with nails (or other suitable fasteners) or adhesive.

### Fitting the felt

Lay out the number of pieces of pattern scribing felt required for the size of the room. At walls, be certain the felt is tight against the cove fillet strip (Figure 101) and continues up the wall to within 1/4" (6.4mm) of the cap trim.

Trim felt about 1/2" (12.8mm) short of the inside corner juncture down to the subfloor as shown in Figure 102.

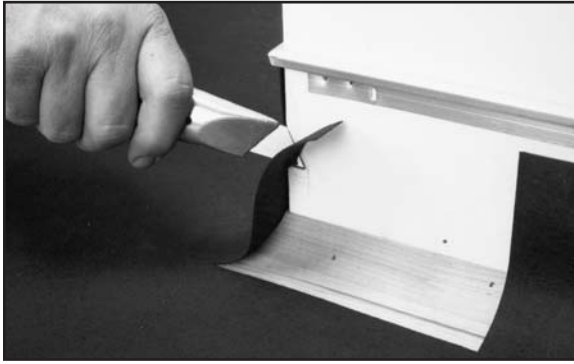


Fig. 101. Pattern felt must be held tightly against cove fillet strip and continue up wall to 1/4" (6.4mm) below cap trim.



Fig. 102. Trim pattern felt about 1/2" (12.8mm) from inside corner juncture.

At outside corners, trim the lapped up felt short of the cap trim, hold the knife at a 90° angle, and then cut the felt net to the corner juncture, from the top down to the cove fillet strip (Figure 103). Then, insert the knife blade into the outside corner miter, hold the felt tightly against the cove fillet strip, and extend the cut to the subfloor (Figure 104). This will allow the felt to fold around the corner and lay flat. The felt at the corner is now in the shape required to transcribe one side of the outside corner.



**Fig. 103.** Cut felt net to corner juncture with knife on 90° angle.



**Fig. 104.** Insert knife blade into cove fillet miter and extend cut to subfloor.

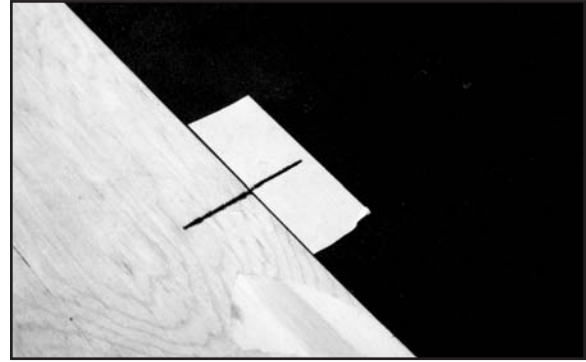
### Scribing Felt Pattern

Where more than one piece of pattern felt is being used, follow the procedure as described in the previous section:

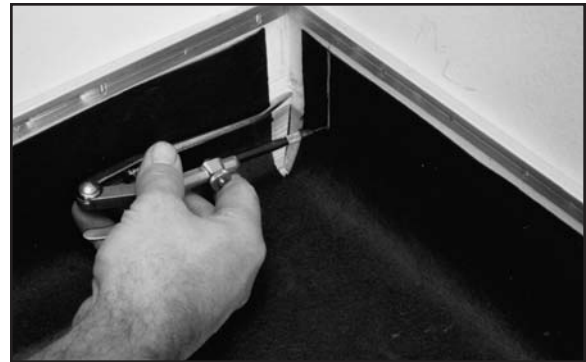
- Make light cut marks across butted felt edges so the strips can be precisely aligned later.
- Set the dividers to the desired width (about 1" or 2.5cm) and mark the setting on the felt to allow for resetting the dividers at a later time, if required.
- Cut out a number of oblong windows in each felt strip and fasten them to the subfloor with wide masking tape.

Make a number of set marks on the felt with a corresponding mark on the subfloor as shown in Figure 105. These marks will then be transferred to the flooring so it can be precisely placed in the room after being cut to fit.

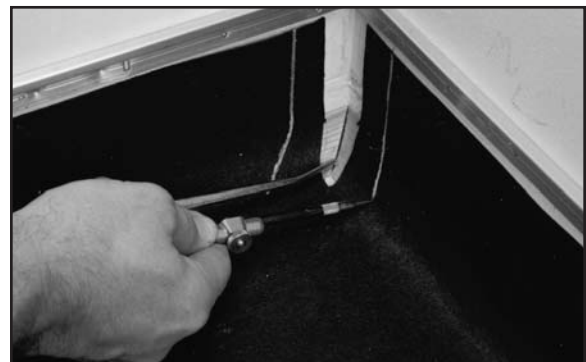
When scribing an inside corner, hold the dividers perpendicular to the wall (Figure 106). Start at the top and scribe the felt, extending the scribe mark to the bottom of the cove fillet strip (Figure 107). Do this on both sides of the corner.



**Fig. 105.** Make set marks on felt and subfloor for later alignment of flooring.

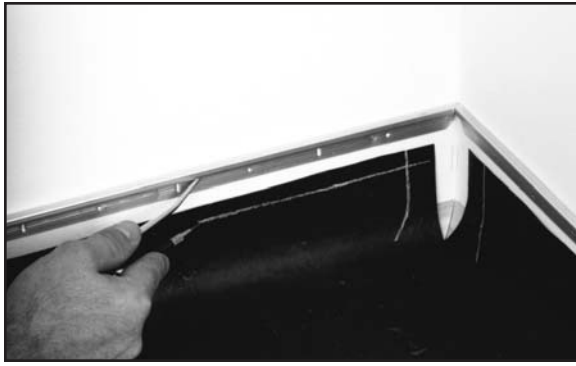


**Fig. 106.** Hold dividers perpendicular to wall to scribe inside corners.



**Fig. 107.** Extend scribe marks to bottom of cove fillet strip.

The next step is to scribe to the bottom of the cap trim (Figure 108). It will be necessary to add the distance from the bottom of the cap face to the maximum distance the flooring will slide under the cap when the pattern is transcribed to the flooring. Be certain the scriber setting is changed back to the original setting after transcribing.



**Fig. 108.** Scribe to the bottom of the cap trim.

### Transcribing the Felt Pattern to Flooring

At inside corners, transcribe both sides of the corner using the same divider setting (Figure 109). Although one side of the corner will be long by the thickness of the flooring material, Congoleum products will compress enough to compensate for this extra thickness and make for a tighter fitting corner.

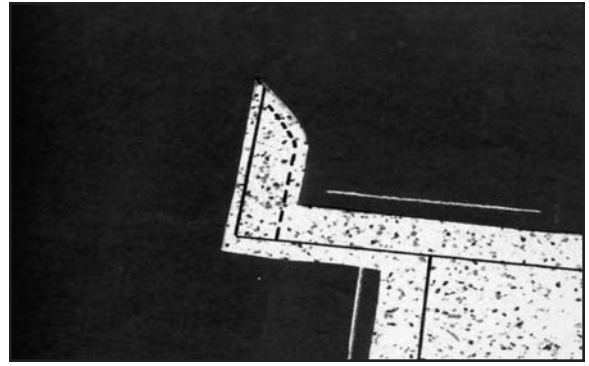


**Fig. 109.** Transcribe both sides of inside corner

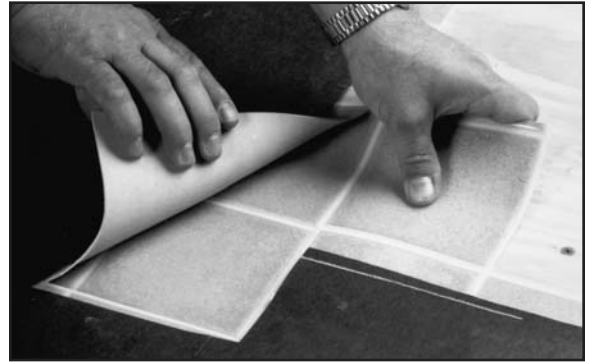
At outside corners, add 1/2" (1.3cm) to the flooring on the straight part of the corner (Figure 110). This will be trimmed to fit later after the flooring has been positioned in the room. For the distance of the cove fillet strip, allow approximately 1/8" (3.2mm) of excess material. Final trimming of this short area will be done after the flooring has been cut to fit and positioned in the room.

Next, square off the flooring material on the opposite side of the corner for the corner fill piece (right angle seam from the cap trim). With many designs, it is possible to position seams in grout lines, or other inconspicuous areas of the design. Use a piece of material for the fill which corresponds to the design in the flooring; an exact match can be obtained (Figure 111). Position the fill piece under the squared-off area to be filled. Follow the edge of the flooring on the top piece to cut seams in the fill piece below (Figure 112). Leave excess flooring at the corner juncture (up to 3" or 7.6cm). Put the fill piece aside for final trimming later.

**NOTE:** The seam for the fill piece should be made on the floor. Try to place the seam in a grout line, or other inconspicuous area, as close to the wall as possible.



**Fig. 110.** Add 1/2" (1.3cm) to the flooring on straight part of corner.



**Fig. 111.** Make seams for corner fill pieces in grout lines or other inconspicuous areas of the design whenever possible.



**Fig. 112.** Follow squared off edges to cut corner fill piece below.

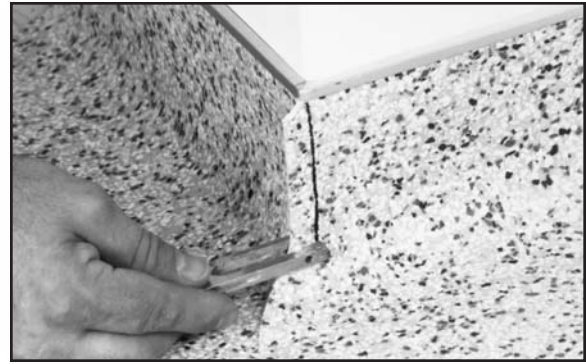
### Completing the Self-Cove Installation

Remove the felt pattern and position the flooring material in place within the room according to the set marks transferred from the felt (Figure 113).

The next step is to adhere the flooring material one-half of the sheet at a time. Apply 3044 Adhesive to walls with a paint brush and on the subfloor with the recommended trowel. Depending on the temperature and flooring product, it may be necessary to warm coved areas with a heat gun. After the flooring material has been rolled, place the edge at walls under the cap trim and thoroughly roll the coved wall area with a steel hand roller. The final step is to complete the outside corner. It will look as pictured in Figure 114.



**Fig. 113.** Position flooring in room precisely on set marks.



**Fig. 115.** Scribe the straight section of the corner.



**Fig. 114.** Ready for completion of outside corner.



**Fig. 116.** Insert knife blade in cove fillet corner miter as a cutting guide.

### Outside Corner Fill

At this point, the outside corner has an extension of the flooring past the corner on one side. The other side requires a fill piece (previously cut). Follow these steps to complete the corner:

1. Set the recess scribe for the thickness of the flooring material and scribe the straight section of the corner (down to the cove fillet strip).
2. Hold the knife at a 45° angle to the flooring and trim off this section.
3. At the cove fillet strip, insert the knife blade in the corner miter on a 45° angle and trim off the excess flooring. Insert the knife blade in the corner miter of the cove fillet strip as a guide to trim off the excess material.
4. Leave the balance of the flooring extending onto the subfloor as is.

5. Apply adhesive to the wall and subfloor on the opposite side of the corner and insert the fill piece. Roll the fill piece thoroughly with a steel hand roller.

6. Follow steps 1 and 2 to trim the flooring to fit the corner, except set the recess scribe, so that the pin is directly over the leading edge of the button (Figure 115). Follow step 3 and carefully cut the flooring over the cove fillet strip to achieve a net seam (Figure 116). Where the flooring material overlaps, and extends onto the subfloor, use a small straightedge to make a double-cut seam.

7. To complete the corner, the seams should be sealed using the recommended seam sealer. At the outside corner miter, use a cotton Q-Tip® to apply the seam sealer.